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NASA Procedural Requirements

COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY**NPR 3335.1H**Effective Date:
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Request Notification of Change

 (NASA Only)

Subject: Internal Placement of NASA Employees

Responsible Office: Office of Human Capital Management

[| TOC](#) | [Preface](#) | [Chapter1](#) | [Chapter2](#) | [Chapter3](#) | [Chapter4](#) | [Chapter5](#) |
[Chapter6](#) | [Chapter7](#) | [Chapter8](#) | [Chapter9](#) | [Chapter10](#) | [Chapter11](#) |
[Chapter12](#) | [Chapter13](#) | [Chapter14](#) | [Chapter15](#) | [Chapter16](#) | [AppendixA](#) |
[AppendixB](#) | [AppendixC](#) | [ALL](#) |

Chapter 3. Competitive Procedures

3.1 When Competitive Procedures Are Required

3.1.1 The requirements of NASA's Competitive Placement Plan shall apply to the following actions and all other promotions not excluded by Section 3.2:

- a. Temporary promotions over 120 days. In computing the 120 days, prior service under all noncompetitive details to higher-graded positions or noncompetitive temporary promotions during the preceding 12 months is included. If appropriate, the option to make these promotions permanent, without additional competition, shall be in the announcement. (Note: Competition is not required if the individual has previously held the higher grade on a permanent basis or successfully competed for promotion potential to the higher grade.)
- b. Details of more than 120 days to a higher-graded position or to a position with greater promotion potential. If appropriate, the option of extending the detail without additional competition shall be stated in the announcement. (Note: Competition is not required if the individual has previously held the higher grade on a permanent basis or successfully competed for promotion potential to the higher grade.)
- c. Training that is required for promotion.
- d. Reassignment, or change to a lower grade, to a nontemporary position with more promotion potential than a nontemporary position previously held (except when permitted by reduction-in-force regulations).
- e. Term employees who meet conversion requirements under the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004 may be selected for permanent appointment under competitive placement procedures. The requirements for competitive conversion are contained in NPR 3300.1, Appointment of Personnel To/From NASA.

3.2 When Competitive Procedures Are Not Required

3.2.1 Promotion resulting from reclassification of a position (without significant change in duties and responsibilities) on the basis of either issuance of a new classification standard

or the correction of a classification error.

3.2.2 A position change permitted by reduction-in-force regulations.

3.2.3 Any action, including a promotion, directed by an individual or organization with authority that supersedes this plan. These include, but are not limited to, actions as a result of discrimination complaint decisions, court decisions, settlement of judicial or administrative cases, or arbitrators' decisions.

3.2.4 A career promotion, when:

a. The employee's position is reclassified because of additional duties and responsibilities. Care shall be taken to ensure that the merit system principle of fair and open competition for advancement is followed when determining the appropriateness of an accretion promotion by offering other employees in similar positions the opportunity to compete for the higher-graded position.

b. Competition was held at an earlier stage (e.g., Office of Personnel Management (OPM) register, NASA's Competitive Placement Plan, or other approved competitive process such as direct hire or delegated examining authorities) and the promotion is to a grade at or below the full performance level of the position.

c. Promotion following noncompetitive conversion of a Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) appointment, a Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA), a Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP) appointment, or other such authorized actions.

3.2.5 Selection of current or former Federal employees from another competitive staffing authority, such as direct hire authority.

3.2.6 Movement to a position having the same (or lower) promotion potential than a current or prior position held on a permanent basis.

3.2.7 Temporary promotions for periods of 120 days or fewer.

3.2.8 Details for 120 days or fewer to higher-graded positions or positions with promotion potential.

3.2.9 Repromotion, transfer, or reinstatement up to the highest grade previously held on a permanent basis under a career or career-conditional appointment, unless demoted for personal cause or unacceptable performance.

3.2.10 Selection of a candidate from the Reemployment Priority List.

3.2.11 Term employees appointed under the NASA Flexibility Act noncompetitively converted to a career or career-conditional appointment. The requirements for non-competitive conversion are contained in NPR 3300.1, Appointment of Personnel To/From NASA.

3.3 Special Considerations

3.3.1 Special Consideration for Repromotion or Reassignment

3.3.1.1 Employees who have been demoted in NASA without personal cause are entitled to special consideration for repromotion or reassignment.

3.3.1.2 This special consideration applies to positions at the employee's former grade or any intervening grades that are to be filled under this plan.

3.3.1.3 The right to special consideration does not apply to any position with a projected promotion potential higher than the retained grade or the grade held at the time the change to a lower grade was effected.

3.3.1.4 This special consideration is to be given at the NASA Center where the employee was demoted and is currently employed.

3.3.1.5 The entitlement to special consideration shall begin as of the effective date of the action on which the eligibility is based.

3.3.1.6 The entitlement to special consideration shall continue for a two-year period, unless the employee declines a reasonable offer of a position as defined in OPM regulations. If an employee accepts an equivalent position within the two-year period, eligibility ends with the effective date of the action.

3.3.2 Correction of Procedural Error

3.3.2.1 An employee who was not afforded proper consideration, due to a harmful procedural error in a previous competitive placement action, shall be given priority consideration for the next appropriate (i.e., similar) vacancy filled under this plan. "Appropriate" vacancy is defined in Appendix A.1.

3.3.2.2 Priority consideration means that the employee shall be referred to the selecting official for consideration before other candidates are considered under these competitive procedures. If selected on the basis of the priority consideration, the employee may be promoted or reassigned as an exception to the competitive procedures of this plan.

3.3.2.3 When an employee is referred for priority consideration but is not selected, this decision shall be documented in the Competitive Placement Record (see Appendix A.5 for definition).

3.4 Area of Consideration

3.4.1 The minimum area of consideration for positions advertised under this plan shall be Center-wide, unless otherwise specified in the announcement.

3.4.2 The basis for using a smaller minimum area shall be documented in the Competitive Placement Record.

3.4.3 When the minimum area of consideration fails to identify a diverse applicant pool with sufficient numbers of high-quality candidates, the area may be expanded.

3.4.4 Employees in long-term rotational assignments in technical roles at the Independent Program Assessment Division (IPAD), the NASA Engineering and Safety Center (NESC), and the NASA Safety Center (NSC) shall be eligible to apply and be considered for any vacancy in the Agency, including those open only to Center employees. Long-term rotational assignments are those lasting two to five years. Such employees may be asked to provide documentation that validates that they are on such a rotational assignment (e.g., a memorandum of understanding). Employees in administrative, secretarial, and business support positions at IPAD, NESC, and NSC are not eligible.

3.5 Announcements

3.5.1. Announcements shall be prepared using the NASA STARS vacancy builder.

3.5.2 In addition to minimum Federal information requirements, announcements shall also include:

- a. A statement concerning payment or nonpayment of relocation allowances if the area of consideration extends beyond the local commuting area.
- b. In accordance with NPR 3792.1, Plan for a Drug-Free Workplace, an indication if the vacancy is for a Testing Designated Position.
- c. A statement regarding the need for a security clearance if the position designation is other than nonsensitive.

3.5.3 For positions filled under this plan, an announcement shall be posted on a publicized Web site or other location available to Center employees.

3.6 Application Period

3.6.1 Specific Vacancies

3.6.1.1 Announcements shall generally remain open for at least five workdays. A shorter open period may be used if large numbers of qualified and diverse applicants are anticipated and the Competitive Placement Record is documented as to the rationale for the reduced open period.

3.6.1.2 Employees shall be advised at least annually where vacancy announcements for other Centers may be reviewed.

3.6.2 Recurring Vacancies. Vacancy announcements with closing dates of up to one year from the initial opening date, i.e., "open continuous," may be used to advertise recurring vacancies. All employees who file under such announcements shall be automatically considered for all covered vacancies filled after the submission of their application, providing they comply with all instructions in the vacancy announcement.

3.6.3 Like Vacancies. A selection certificate may be reissued to fill like vacancies if the selection(s) may be made within 90 days of issuance of the original certificate. A "like vacancy" is considered to be one with the same title, series, grade, promotion potential, and duty location; the primary duties of the position are similar and require possession of the same competencies.

3.7 Application Procedures

3.7.1 General Procedures

3.7.1.1 A résumé is required for all positions filled under NASA's Competitive Placement Plan.

3.7.1.2 Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their résumés are up to date and properly reflect current employment status and qualifications.

3.7.2 Acceptance of Applications

3.7.2.1 Electronic résumés received by midnight, Eastern time, on the closing date of the announcement shall be accepted.

3.7.2.2 Hard-copy résumés received by close of business on the closing date shall be accepted.

3.7.2.3 The Center's Human Resources Director (or designee) may grant an extension of the application deadline if circumstances warrant. All applicants who are known to be in like circumstances shall be granted the extension.

3.7.2.4 All decisions to extend the closing date shall be documented in the Competitive Placement Record.

3.7.2.5 It is the applicants' obligation to present their qualifications for the position. Individuals who submit some, but not all, required information shall be ineligible for consideration for the position.

3.7.2.4 Applicants are encouraged to use the NASA STARS Applicant Guide when preparing résumés and submitting their résumés through STARS. The Applicant Guide is available on the NASA Jobs Web site at
https://ifmpmsfc11.ifmp.nasa.gov/nasa/info/applicant_guide.html.

3.7.3 Supervisory Referrals

3.7.3.1 Upon an employee's written request (e-mail or hard copy), the supervisor shall submit the employee's name for appropriate vacancies announced during an employee's absence.

3.7.3.2 Prior to making the request, the employee shall ensure that a résumé has been completed.

3.7.3.3 The employee's written request shall provide the supervisor with all of the information necessary to use the designated application process.

3.8 Concurrent Consideration of Outside Applicants

3.8.1 Applicants who are eligible for transfer or reinstatement may, at the option of the Center, be given concurrent consideration with NASA employees under this plan. Such applicants shall be evaluated using the same criteria as NASA employees and compete with NASA employees for consideration.

3.8.2 Applicants who do not have competitive status (i.e., are not current Federal employees, transfers, or reinstatement eligibles) do not compete under the provisions of this plan, except for veterans eligible for consideration under the Veterans Employment Opportunity Act (VEOA). Veterans eligible under the VEOA may compete under this plan only when positions are open to competitive status applicants not currently employed by NASA. (Note: If an announcement is open for the acceptance of applications under this plan and also open to any U.S. citizen, VEOA provisions do not apply.)

3.9 Determining Basic Qualifications

3.9.1 The minimum qualification standards prescribed or approved by OPM (including any required written tests and selective factors) shall be used to determine basic eligibility of candidates for competitive consideration.

3.9.2 Selective Factors

3.9.2.1 Selective factors (i.e., competencies essential for satisfactory performance in the position to be filled) are part of the minimum qualification standards. Justification for use of selective factors shall be recorded in the Competitive Placement Record.

3.9.2.2 Vacancy announcements shall identify the minimum qualification standards (including selective factors).

3.9.3 Applicants meeting time-in-grade and time-after-competitive-appointment requirements by the closing date of the vacancy announcement shall be eligible for consideration for selection.

3.10 Evaluation of Candidates

3.10.1 General Information

3.10.1.1 Candidates eligible for noncompetitive selection need not be rated or referred under this plan, but may be referred separately, outside of competitive procedures, to the selecting official.

3.10.1.2 Selections made under this plan shall be made from among the best-qualified candidates based upon job-related evaluation criteria.

3.10.2 Evaluation Criteria

3.10.2.1 The skills or competencies used in evaluating candidates for competitive placement shall be identified on the basis of a job analysis and supported by the position description.

3.10.2.2 The skills or competencies and the rating criteria shall be developed jointly by the Center's Human Resources Director and the selecting official (or their designees).

3.10.2.3 The basis of rating and specific duties required for successful performance of the position shall be included in the announcement.

3.10.2.4 The degree to which applicants possess the skills or competencies shall be determined through an evaluation of pertinent information such as experience, education and training, awards, and performance appraisals.

3.10.2.5 The evaluation process shall consist of the use of an automated rating system and review of applications by the Center's Human Resources Office.

3.10.3 Ranking Candidates

3.10.3.1 The ranking process is intended to identify the relative degree to which qualified applicants possess the specified skills or competencies. The Center's Human Resources Director (or designee), after consultation with the selecting official, may waive the normal ranking process if there are ten or fewer qualified applicants at a given grade level. In such cases, the qualified applicants shall be further screened against job-related criteria.

3.10.3.2 When ranking is performed, all applicants shall be evaluated against the same job criteria (skills) or competencies. Complete details are found in the NASA STARS Users Guide. The NASA STARS Users Guide is available at <https://epss.nasa.gov/ucontent/de55c340be2a419280bfc60a28aa701a/index.pdf>.

3.10.3.3 Applicants who meet the minimum qualifications of the position shall be rated on either a numerical scale (e.g., 70, 80, and 90) or a nominal scale (e.g., Qualified, Highly Qualified, Exceptionally Qualified).

3.10.3.4 In cases where there are a large number of candidates in the top evaluation group, applicants may be further evaluated by identifying those who possess the skills determined to be most important for successful performance.

3.10.3.5 Once applicants are rated, they shall be ranked in order.

3.10.3.6 The Center's Human Resources Director (or designee) shall consult the selecting official (or designee) to determine the point in this order at which there is meaningful distinction between the candidates above and below that point.

3.10.3.7 All candidates above that point shall be referred to the selecting official.

3.11 Competitive Placement Certificate

3.11.1 Candidates shall be listed on the competitive placement certificate in alphabetical order (see Appendix A.4 for definition). Any employee listed on the certificate is eligible for selection.

3.11.2 If no selection has been made within 30 days of the date the certificate was issued, the certificate shall be canceled unless the Center's Human Resources Director (or designee) approves an extension. With appropriate justification, the selecting official may have up to two 30-day extensions.

3.11.3 In no case shall the certificate be extended beyond 90 days.

3.12 Interviews

The selecting official and/or designee(s) may conduct interviews (including telephone interviews) of some, all, or none of the candidates.

3.13 Release

The Center's Human Resources Director (or designee) shall arrange for the expeditious release of the selectee from their current position.

3.14 Timeliness

Each Center shall determine appropriate procedures to ensure the timeliness of all activities associated with this plan.

| [TOC](#) | [Preface](#) | [Chapter1](#) | [Chapter2](#) | [Chapter3](#) | [Chapter4](#) |
[Chapter5](#) | [Chapter6](#) | [Chapter7](#) | [Chapter8](#) | [Chapter9](#) | [Chapter10](#) |
[Chapter11](#) | [Chapter12](#) | [Chapter13](#) | [Chapter14](#) | [Chapter15](#) |
[Chapter16](#) | [AppendixA](#) | [AppendixB](#) | [AppendixC](#) | [ALL](#) |

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[Search](#) |

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